

# Letters

bamboo of the Ankarana forests, so there is the exciting possibility that a second population of *H. simus* is living on in a remote pocket of this little-known reserve.

## References

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The 'rediscovery' of *Hapalemur simus* last year has been publicized widely, with even national newspapers taking an interest. It is to be hoped that the lemurs will benefit from the publicity, but it is a shame that unwarranted claims have been made. Certainly, the relocation of *H. simus* is an exciting and important find. Unfortunately, not one of the many news items I have read properly acknowledges or even names the two Frenchmen, Jean-Jacques Petter and André Peyrieras, who rediscovered the lemur in 1972 after it had not been seen for 100 years.

The species is undoubtedly rare; it is also secretive and has a localized distribution, but, had an effort been made to look for it between 1972 and 1986, it is likely that it would have been found. This view is upheld by the fact that the 1986 expedition to look for the species found it where J.-J. Petter and A. Peyrieras discovered it. If every species were declared extinct after such a brief period of not being seen, the list of extant mammals would be greatly reduced.

Petter and Peyrieras, both of whom have vast experience in Madagascar, have been overlooked in the recent publicity. They, amongst others, would not have presumed that this lemur was extinct. A degree of tact when announcing such claims as this would go a long way to promote international co-operation in wildlife conservation.

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## The WWF and Gunung Leuser National Park, Sumatra

Our attention has been drawn to an incorrect statement in an otherwise excellent article by Michael Ghiglieri in *Oryx* (Volume 20, April 1986). On page 109 the author quotes the WWF as having sponsored the expensive failure of the Uning Puni relocation project. In fact, our role in Gunung Leuser has always been orientated towards providing scientific and managerial advice to the Forest Protection and Nature Conservation Service. Since the early 1970s the WWF has supported a succession of scientists and park advisers who have counselled our Indonesian colleagues on management problems, including advice on how to deal with population enclaves within the park. The WWF has never been involved in any operational aspects of the Uning Puni relocation project.

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## A park with a kangaroo problem

David Cheal's discussion of the rehabilitation of Hattah-Kulkyne National Park (*Oryx*, **20**, 95–99) is misleading in its outline of the historical changes to the park's fauna. Cheal claims that kangaroos were 'very rare' or 'scarce' in north-western Victoria prior to European settlement, citing Wakefield's analysis of the progress of the Blandowski expedition. However, Wakefield's analysis clearly shows that the diary of the expedition covered only the period from December 1856, when the expedition left Melbourne, to March 1857, by which time it had reached Lake Boga and was still some 130 km south-west of Hattah-Kulkyne National Park. Up to that stage, the diary referred to kangaroos (almost certainly the eastern grey kangaroo *Macropus giganteus*, not the western grey kangaroo *M. fuliginosus*) as 'scarce'.

The expedition later established a camp near the present site of Mildura, about 45 km north of the park. There, other records of the expedition described the western grey kangaroo as 'very common on both sides of the Murray' and 'much

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